

Time: 8:00 EST

Date: 7/12/2012

Agenda:

- Peter Joseph demands that an article - titled “*Debunking The Venus Project*” - be removed from issue 8 of *Spirit of the Times* magazine. TZM Australia have been given 24 hours to comply with the consequence of non-compliance being that the Australian chapter will be removed as an official chapter.

Recording: www.chapterfields.zeitgeistaustralia.org

References:

Emails from Peter Joseph:

#1

LISTEN - DEBATE ALL YOU GUYS WANT but PULL THE ARTICLE OFF YOUR AUSTRALIAN SITE NOW. DO YOU NOT HAVE ANY CONSIDERATION FOR THE FACT THAT I AM THE MAGNET FOR EVERY MALCONTENT OF THE TZM AND EMAILS ARE FLYING BECAUSE OF YOUR LACK OF CONSIDERATION.

IT ALL COMES BACK TO ME WHETHER YOU/WE/I LIKE IT OR NOT AND YES - TVP CAN SUE ME PERSONALLY BECAUSE OF YOU!

take it down, please.

Email #2:

PS - I HAVE SPENT ALMOST 2 YEARS ATTEMPTING TO CONJURE UP A DECENT, MUTUAL RESPECT/ RELATIONSHIP TO OCCUR WITH TVP FOR THE SAKE OF THE BROADER COMMUNITY. I HAD EVEN THEM ON A RADIO SHOW RECENTLY WITH BAKARI TO SHOW THIS INTEREST TO HAVE PEACE AND STOP THE ATTACKS. THEY EVEN CAME ON...IT WAS GETTING BETTER

DID YOU PEOPLE NOT GET THAT? DO YOU NOT SEE THE POINT OF THIS?

I'm sorry, but if I see this thing still on your website tomm, TZM Australia will be removed as an official chapter. You have no idea the shit storm I/we are now dealing with because of this stupidity.

Email #3:

PPS!

okay, now that my all caps yelling is out of the way... :)

I'm sorry to be irritated and I will spare you a run down of the nonsense that continues. I'm know you meant well David. I admire your perseverance. However, this does need to be corrected or Global will, indeed, need to disassociate from Australia. This has been recommended by many now.

All we ask is that the banner (anything with "Debunking TVP") be taken down and the online version be edited to remove the TVP article.

That's it.

Cool?

PJ

Article in Question:

http://www.zeitgeistaustralia.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2012/11/Spirit-Of-The-Times-2012_issue8_web.pdf

Response from TVP to the article:

<http://www.facebook.com/notes/the-venus-project-global/response-on-magazine-spirit-of-the-times/449393325124324>

How is the decision made:

Each member present will present their position on this matter. This input will be collated and shared understanding will be extrapolated. A decision will be presented based on this shared understanding.

Positions of each member present at the emergency meeting:

David Zwolski - since the article in question was written by me - i will abide to what the chapter decides.

Karin McGregor: Spirit of the Times magazine is not the official voice of TZM - a disclaimer will be provided on the TZM Australia website to clarify this; the magazine does not reflect the views of TZM. There is, therefore, no justification for removing/censoring the article in question.

Casey Davidson - The article is valid but it should be removed to avoid unnecessary damage.

Ziggy T - The article should be removed, a summary of TVP's letter should be published in the next issue, and a formal apology be done in the issue's editorial for the slanderous material and any incorrect information stated as fact in the article. In the future, any content published by, or somehow associated with, the official Australian Chapter must be screened by the global

community to ensure it is free from libellous material, slanderous lies, or false information (just as most responsible editorials do), most especially those articles relating TVP actions, materials, or activists, for political reasons. Also, PJ's decision power must be limited and egalitarian. I am personally upset that my chapter is being defensive after having offended, and that the editorial of the magazine they run failed to ensure, before publishing, that an article of this calibre, did not include any defamations using inaccurate, inconsistent, or unreferenced content, as this damages the credibility of the chapter and the movement overall.

Eugene (Sydney) - The article and magazine should stay online. The author of the article has not broken any of the standards, rules or conventions of the TZM. The problem with TZM is that anyone that shows initiative (like this author did) within the guidelines of TZM globally or locally, they are shut down, censored or ignored for it, whilst everyone sits on their hands and does nothing (whilst the few activists taking action burn out). No-one should have to cowtow to the biased and authoritarian opinion of PJ. This IS supposed to be a leaderless, non-hierarchical grass-roots movement, not a top-down hierarchical organization or institution.

Josh (Sydney) - The article should stay, Peter Joseph has no authority to make such threats.

Glenn Anthony - This has nothing to do with individual members of the movement, I'm not happy with the presumed association with the article. If the article offends them, let them take it down or take it up diplomatically with the author, but do not threaten the whole chapter.

Dabbler44/Dave(Melbourne) - My final opinion: It needs to be removed, But it needs to be replaced with a statement on behalf of the WHOLE Australian chapter, stating the irrationality of threats made and of punishment itself, and that one individual's actions should NOT be able to jeopardize a whole chapters progression. Such forceful statements are not befitting of a grassroots, non-hierarchical movement. While the article should be taken down from the Zeitgeist Page out of respect to all parties, it should be shifted to an alternative server, and sanitized so it is not affiliated with the movement. Furthermore one individuals opinions are a right of free speech, and censorship should not take place within such a movement, as long as a disclaimer is stating so.

Benjamin Ellis western australia, Facebook page manager

Maybe we can attach this statement to the website, facebook page and all online publications;

-----Please be advised that the content and opinions displayed on our website and related projects are not exclusively the opinions of all members of the zeitgeist movement and remain that of the author at all times. Our purpose is to share and promote ideas that inspire you to think and this is the sole purpose of the Zeitgeist Movement. We are everything yet nothing.-----

Ian Clow: I am of the opinion that we should take the article down as requested. However I would suggest we send a strongly worded protest letter saying that we, the Australian chapter are not happy about it and include the following reasons why:

- The non compliance with perceived decision making procedures.
- Seemingly dictatorial approach to what are and what are not acceptable views of the movement.
- The Venus Projects many attacks upon us.
- Perceived infiltration by the Venus Project into the TZM linguistic team and it's apparent priority to working on TVP materials before TZM material.
- TVP being promoted on various international TZM chapter web sites
- Perceived infringement on the right to free speech.
- Nonsensical punishment threatened to the whole country for the the writing of one article by one person.

I would like for The Spirit of the Times to remain affiliated with TZM in as official a capacity as possible and for us to weather any storms as they come.

To dissociate the mag from TZM for the sake of editorial freedom would not only leave the magazine, to a large extent, without a purpose but would also alienate it from it's most obvious audience.

I don't think we should cause a fracture over this but we should definitely make our disappointment known.

Damon Catling: Take the article down from the Australian Zeitgeist chapter website, and then remove the Zeitgeist branding from the online versions of the present release of Spirit of the Times, and make a note that the article has been taken down on the request of P.J. Then re-up the "offending" edition and future editions of S.O.T. as an "unofficial" publication. Continue to hold P.J. & others accountable for "walking their talk".

Sanjin Article should stay. It puts forward the views of one individual in a calm factual manner. Clearly we need to clarify that the magazine is platform for varying views and opinions. Any progressive social movement cannot progress without constantly engaging diverging views. After all the whole Zeitgeist concept is built on a rebellion from a mainstream consensus on religion, geo-politics and economics, have we come full circle, to the point where we all perpetuate official and approved points of view?

As a compromise I suggest we offer to make spirit of the times an independent magazine with the aim of offering a free platform for the views of a community which is by no means monolithic. THIS MEANS THAT ALL LINKS TO THIS ARTICLE ON THE OFFICIAL PAGE ARE GONE AND ITS NO LONGER AN ISSUE.

Axiom: In the interests of freedom of speech i don't believe we need to pull the article, perhaps a disclaimer in your next issue. Pull any logo's or anything relating to the movement (sanitize your publication). The End.

Android:

If PJ wants it gone, hiding it might make it worse. If the article will be taken down it might get remembered as THE Article that got taken down. That might draw even more attention to it. Perhaps I am not completely aware of the email shitstorm PJ has to go through but I can not see how a 24hr censorship ultimatum is going to make it all better. -If we comply and take it down -it looks bad (on PJ). If we keep it, PJ shuts down the Chapter -it looks super bad(on PJ!). It really seems like a response to the article or some kind of a Clear-up Follow-up article would have been much more appropriate. But, if PJ is feeling irate and is about to do something crazy like shut down the AUS chapter, we should be careful not to provoke him and perhaps comply. The "censorship" issue will definitely be raised with PJ but I think it is very important to maintain a very friendly and empathetic tone. We must be careful with scrutiny as we might not be completely aware of his "complicated" situation. But that is not to say we can't enquire. PJ should be informed that his ultimatum (especially 24hr timer) that was totally unnecessary. We could have all came to a consensus and taken it down without any threats if the situation was communicated to us better. I think PJ was a bit hot-headed and he might even have a different opinion on the situation later on. But for now, we gotta do wh

Simon C: Davids criticism was valid although the language could have been more diplomatic (and the timing unfortunate) but the article should be removed to avoid damage with the message that it will be reposted with a disclaimer and that the issues of censorship and PJ's actions be scrutinized.

Billy: The article should stay this what freedom of speech is all about and TZM concept is all about it too, so how can PJ contradict himself in such way! If anything might happen for the AU chapter we (asia-pacific group) should do something about it and show our support to AU chapter.

Emily G: TZM Australia has done very well in moving forward after the split but if PJ is still stuck on this, then that's his issue. He doesn't have the power to say we are unofficial, since when did we give him that authority? He doesn't have the power over anyone in Australia, we are not 'incorporated', everyone does this in their own time. Spirit of the times magazine is one of TZM greatest achievements and Davids article is insightful and useful to its readers. I don't believe it should be taken out. We continue the Australian Chapter because we want to, not because of a man who made documentaries decides for us what we can and cant do. We has always tried to say there is no hierarchy in this movement, it is quite evident now that the control of the movement is starting to show. It is Peter Josephs loss if he decides to strip us of our title. He loses respect from all of us. We aren't doing it for him though, we are doing it for humanity. I'll even go as far to say we are doing in for Australia. So, keep the article, keep everything as it is. I feel he has no ground to rid us of a title of being 'official'. We decide that, not him.

Davidson (Singapore) I have read the article, the response and the emails. I suggest taking the article down. There are bigger battles ahead and this is perhaps an example of it. The approach all parties take will be testament to the new society we are trying to create. An adversarial or combative approach with ultimatums is what has gotten the world into the situation it is now in. The taking down of the article, to me, figures not as a retreat but an

approach to understanding and the conversation moves from there. To resist, to stand up and fight is not the point; it is to understand and to understand is to transform what it is.

Shakti: The article should stay (but corrected taking into consideration TVP response), because it expresses a desire for the truth. The comments are valid and corrections may be added, that is what discussion is. Absence of discussion is absence of Rule of Law. We must be constantly skeptical, and yet rather than throw out the baby with the bath water, recognise that this is all a process of negotiation in progress, and the minute someone decides to dictate, we remain in the mess we are in. You do not create victims, you nurture them. Please remember: PUNISHMENT is a FAILED EXPERIMENT. Those who create victims maintain the problems. If Jacque and Roxane think they know better, they better think hard about participating in this reality distortion. QED to David. As usual, the negative points are focused upon with disregard for all the valid points.

MASON LEE - The article should be removed to avoid damaging TVP and TZMs relationship with one another. It could also damage TZM just as much as TVP as we are still strongly associated particularly by those who know little about us. I think it puts many people in very difficult situations, and i do not see much benefit in keeping the article if it simply distracts us from pursuing our goals and causes disputes. Remove it and we can move on and stay connected with the global chapters. As long as this doesn't set a precedent or expectation to blindly follow instructions from the main faces of TZM, i don't see the problem with maintaining peace within the movement and making some sacrifice for the benefit of the direction of TVP and TZM. Saying this I think David wrote the article with good intentions and hasn't done anything wrong and deserves to be appreciated for all his efforts.

Tee Zackem (Malaysia) I have read the whole article and pretty much agree with the points it presented.

I just have some questions:

1. What's the gain in debunking TVP? What is the article trying to achieve? Why all the focus on TVP and negativity? Why not focus on just positive things that are happening with all other sustainable organizations and projects around the world?
2. Is the conflict caused in TZM AUS website by promoting this article, necessary?
3. Whatever happened to the 'ideas, not names' notion that we have all agreed upon? Like many, I was disappointed that TVP parted with TZM too. I am aware that TVP hasn't really 'realized' what they are promoting. However, I still support the ideas that they have presented. It's just that I don't expect TVP is the ones to fulfill our dreams. Anyone can work on these ideas. Yes they keep their blueprints from everyone else, but what's stopping everyone else from coming up with their own blueprints, based on the ideas?

My conclusion:

If I were the author, I will post the article somewhere else, away from TZM chapters. By doing so, I achieved two things: 1. No further unnecessary conflicts caused to TZM AUS chapter; 2. anyone can still read my article.

I am disappointed at PJ's emotional expression too, but emotions aside, he only mentioned that the article is to be removed from the website, not deleted from the world and have it seen by nobody at all. He simply doesn't want unnecessary conflicts.

Mahima (India): Ok, crisis management time.

1. First, ask yourself this: what is the purpose of the article? Is it to present unbiased information on David's experience of TVP? Or is it to attack TVP in the public domain? If it is the former, then I suggest rewrite the article from the viewpoint of a neutral observer, presenting both positives and negatives of *David's TVP experience*. For an example of this kind of communication, just look at how BBC deals with controversial issues – they're neither here nor there, but the message gets through without ruffling too many feathers. It may not seem like outright honest news, but it's just a cleaner smarter way to put it out there. That's the purpose.

2. Then, ask the same question about the purpose of SOT. If you find that the purpose is to have a platform for open communication (which I think it is), then continue SOT as an independent publication, and as the work of Kari, David, and other independent contributors. It does not need to be linked on any "official" TZM site. The only example that comes to mind is *Culture In Decline*. We know it's PJ's work so we are aware of the latent association, but nowhere is it associated (and I do despise the word by now) "officially" with the movement or the global chapter website, for PJ knows it is his independent work and is not using the movement as a platform to promote it. Yes, it serves as an obvious extension of the work of TZM, but no one can pull up anyone in the movement for what is presented there, no matter how controversial or satirical. Even if they do, a disclaimer can take care of it. The same posture can be applied to SOT. There's absolutely nothing to lose here.

3. Going forward, let's always keep in mind that if we are chapters of TZM, then we are here to represent views/learnings/goals of TZM as a whole. The nature of TVP as an organization does not need to figure anywhere in defining TZM and its direction. (Maybe it can be discussed in smaller groups/forums, but on a publication it becomes a much larger message/representation.) We are what we are. They are what they are. And in the end, there is no difference between any of us. Of course, personal views can and should never be stifled. But then they need to be presented as personal views, not the views of an entire chapter. I'd hate to see the efforts of all the members of TZM Australia be gutted down because of a single point of view. As valid as that point of view may be, all it needs is a different space for exposure.

4. The 24 hours was a bit much, I guess. We still need to learn a lot about the importance of calm and balanced dialogue. That is perhaps the only way forward. Everything else tends to become speculative, defensive, and reeking of fear.

5. If there are sides to be picked here between Global and Australia, I will pick neither. There is a third side here that I'm picking -- TZM. That side will emerge when all other sides realize how counterproductive it is to have any sides at all.

Micke Kuwahara: I think the article shows an example of really bad judgement, which is why PJ reacts like he does and which is fully understandable. Since the article basically is just slander and speculations in great part and at best wild guesses based on some limited internal knowledge I do not understand why such an article was chosen to be published. A smarter move would have been to express those concerns in other ways and other forums and maybe directly with TVP and Fresco, especially since the author claims to know them personally. Free speech is a must but when someone speaks for many, by association, one must show better judgement, or choose other channels and detach the specific opinion from the rest. I do not see why this article, especially written with that tone and using that title, is of any good use for furthering anything, and especially when much of TVPs ideas have been adopted by TZM, it is really bad form to flame them like that in an official channel. Peter maybe does not have any real rights to close down TZMAu, but I fully understand his panic reaction to do so when after years of working with good relations having other TZM chapters rip it in pieces again. Criticism is healthy and must be expressed, but one must choose its battles and its channels, as well as being fully aware of the end goal, meaning what do we want to achieve by expressing such and such too who and who, here and there. Everyone can make mistakes and express themselves badly now and then, then we learn and apologize and move on, I hope this is one of those occasions. If TZM chapters and its members do not understand the role and impact PJ has and how he has to answer for everything the rest of us say and do then I suggest to think about it really hard again. We live together, in symbiosis, and out of respect for everyone's hard work we must show better judgement when we want to sidestep from the shared path or officially and openly beat your own path. PJs criticism is just, in its harshness, and anyone with a somewhat clear mind and less emotions should be able to see that. Remove the article and follow up this 'mistake' by personally contact those that have been affected including Fresco and TVP and repair relations... and next time one wants to criticise, take it with those people targeted directly first and foremost. We gain nothing by talking shit about anyone. And solve not the reason of our criticism either.

James Hill: Please remove the article, I'm not entirely happy with the way that Peter has dealt with this but i understand his perspective. The reason why I'm asking for it to be taken down is to not lose affiliation with the zeitgeist movement global chapter.

Alex Sipka: I say remove it from anything zeitgeist officially supported, re-post it on your own independent website/area with the response from TVP. Best of luck guys.